
HOUSE BILL 1726

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Representatives Cooper, Haigh, Kirby, Miloscia, Dickerson, Dunshee, Delvin, Lovick, Wood, Hurst and Murray

Read first time 02/01/2001. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Ecology.

1 AN ACT Relating to the treatment of laying hens; adding a new
2 chapter to Title 16 RCW; prescribing penalties; and providing an
3 effective date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

6 (1) Commercial egg production is a source of food and laying hens
7 must be kept in conditions that promote public health;

8 (2) The confinement of laying hens in battery cages is
9 unnecessarily cruel and promotes the production of contaminated eggs;

10 (3) The deliberate withholding of food and water to laying hens for
11 the purpose of increasing or extending egg production is unnecessarily
12 cruel; and

13 (4) Chickens are sentient creatures such that we have an obligation
14 to ensure that they are not confined or treated in a manner that
15 produces unnecessary suffering.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
17 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

1 (1) "Battery cage" means a cage used for the confinement of laying
2 hens.

3 (2) "Debeaking" means to remove the beak, or portion thereof, of
4 the laying hen.

5 (3) "Forced molting" means the deliberate withholding of food or
6 water to a laying hen for the purpose of increasing or extending egg
7 production.

8 (4) "Laying hen" means a live female chicken kept for commercial
9 egg production.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) A person may not confine laying hens in
11 battery cages.

12 (2) A person may not subject a laying hen to forced molting.

13 (3) A person may not remove the beak, or any portion thereof, of a
14 laying hen.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A person may not confine a laying hen
16 without providing the laying hen, on a daily basis, access to natural
17 light and the opportunity to engage in natural behaviors including, but
18 not limited to, walking, perching, dirt scratching, stretching wings,
19 and dust bathing.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A person who knowingly violates section 3
21 (1), (2), or (3) of this act is guilty of a misdemeanor.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) Any person or entity who believes that
23 any person or entity has or is violating this chapter may seek
24 injunctive relief to prevent any continued violation.

25 (2) The prevailing party in an action for injunctive relief under
26 this section is entitled to recover reasonable costs and reasonable
27 attorneys' fees.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** This chapter applies to commercial egg
29 production and operations that are required to be licensed under
30 chapter 69.25 RCW.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Sections 1 through 7 of this act constitute
32 a new chapter in Title 16 RCW.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** This act takes effect January 1, 2005.

--- END ---